

**REMARKS**

The Examiner has rejected/withdrawn all of the claims.

The claims have been amended to more clearly set forth that the claimed subject matter includes the use of an automatic time-based transition between the values of one or more operating parameters of the devices. The invention involves the provision of smooth transitions between the values. One reason for this is to avoid "surprise" to the user by a sudden change in the parameters. Examples for providing this smooth transition are a "low-pass filter [that] preferably has a time constant of approx. 1 second," a "ramp generator or a similar algorithm instead of a low-pass filter," or a "step response to a low-pass filter."

This time-based transition takes place independently of the triggering event once it starts. The cited references, on the other hand, perform these transitions as continuous functions the sound environment.

The Examiner has withdrawn claim 24 as being specific to the embodiment of FIG. 2.

It is respectfully urged once again that claims 1 and 20 also read on the embodiment of FIG. 2. For example, in FIG. 2, the combination of the signal processing unit and a filter unit can easily perform the functions indicated in FIG. 1. FIG. 1 breaks out the pieces to more clearly illustrate the operation of the invention, but these pieces are easily subsumed within the signal processing unit. Similarly, FIG. 4 may be easily implemented with the combination of the signal processing unit and a filter unit of FIG. 2.

It is respectfully submitted that claim 24 should not be restricted.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-6, 13-18, 1/19, 2/19, 3/19, 4/19, 5/19, 6/19, 13/19, 14/19, 15/19, 16/19, 17/19, 18/19, and 20-23 as being unpatentable over Park et al. in view of Traini, Jr.

Neither of these patents teach or suggest an automatic time-based transition between the values of one or more operating parameters of the devices. For example, Park et al. only transitions in direct response to the zoom control. If the zooming stops, the transitions stops. If the zooming is reversed, the transition is reversed. The present invention automatically begins a time-based transition. This transition can then continue independently on its own, unlike the cited references.

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It is respectfully submitted that the claims are allowable over the cited references.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-12, 1/19, 2/19, 3/19, 4/19, 5/19, 6/19, 7/19, 8/19, 9/19, 10/19, 11/19, 12/19, 20-22 as being unpatentable over Ciullo et al in view of Akimoto et al.

Neither of these patents teach or suggest an automatic time-based transition between the values of one or more operating parameters of the devices. For example, Ciullo et al. continuously varies the variable mixer in response to the input signals. For example, if the voice signal drops, the OMR is raised. The present invention automatically begins a time-based transition. This transition can then continue independently on its own, unlike the cited references.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims are allowable over the cited references.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and notification of same is requested.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication which are not covered by an enclosed check, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. 34152.

Respectfully submitted,

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